

Five Minute Foundation Series



4. A COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

We have looked at the old and new covenants. There is another covenant that is important, and that was the covenant God made with Abraham. God told Abraham to leave his country and go to the land he would show him. Not only that, God promised to make him into a great nation, and through him all nations of the world would be blessed.

Abraham believed God and obeyed. That is the kind of faith that pleases God. As soon as Abraham arrived at the place God had shown him, God promised to give him that land. Today we know it as the land of Israel. So God made a covenant with Abraham and we read about that in Genesis 15.

These promises were repeated to Abraham's son Isaac, and then to his grandson Jacob, who was called 'Israel' by God. Hundreds of years later when the 12 sons of Jacob had multiplied into the 12 tribes of Israel, God revealed himself to Moses.

Exodus 3:6 "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob."

Moses knew that this was the same God his ancestors had worshipped. Although God later made a covenant with the nation of Israel he never forgot this covenant that he had made with Abraham. God never forgets his promises.

He had said that through Abraham all nations would be blessed. This was fulfilled when Jesus was born – a direct descendant of Abraham. He had come as Messiah, Saviour and King. After Jesus had ascended back into heaven, Peter declared;

Acts 3:13-26 "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of your fathers has glorified his servant Jesus." Then he went on to say, "This is how God fulfilled what he had foretold."

Many Jew did believe, but the majority did not. Later the Apostle Paul said sadly; "We have the covenants, we were given the law and had temple worship, we had Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and from them came Jesus Christ – but you don't believe." Even in this God worked to bring about His purposes. We are told in Romans 11 that Israel was hardened in part so that the full number of Gentiles could come into the Kingdom of God.

That was nearly 2000 years ago – and over the centuries it has been taught that God's purposes for the Jewish people have finished. It was said the church had replaced Israel. Such thinking led to the death of millions of Jewish people. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 11:1, "Did God reject his people? Absolutely not!" God is faithful to his promises – he had promised to make Abraham a blessing to all nations and that the land would belong to Israel forever.

We have seen how Jesus fulfilled that first promise, but let's look at the second promise about the land. There are prophecies in the Old Testament saying that Israel would return to the land two

times. And that has happened! The first time was after the Babylonian captivity in about 600BC. They were in the land when Jesus was born. Then for almost 2000 years the people were scattered. However in 1948 Israel became a nation again. It was inconceivable this could happen, but it did. Some say it is just political, but it is a fulfilment of prophecy. God is preparing for the time when there will be an ingathering of the Jewish people who will accept Jesus as their Messiah, and be ready for his return. The covenant God made with Abraham not only impacts the nation of Israel and the Jewish people today, but everyone who believes in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:14 “He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”

Notice that we receive this by faith. Abraham responded by faith and so he is called the ‘father of all who believe’. When we believe in Jesus Christ we receive the blessing given through Abraham. What was it? The promise of the Spirit. This is the greatest blessing there is – the Holy Spirit living in us!

Galatians 4:6-7 “You are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out ‘Abba Father’. So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.” Amen!